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**TRAGEDY.**

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3. Feb 1792

# CORIOLANUS.

A  
T R A G E D Y.

As it is Acted at the  
T H E A T R E - R O Y A L  
I N  
C O V E N T - G A R D E N.

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By the late JAMES THOMSON.

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L O N D O N,  
Printed for A. MILLAR at *Buchanan's* Head in  
the *Strand*: MDCCXLIX.

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GORIOLANUS

T R A G E D Y.

As it is acted at the

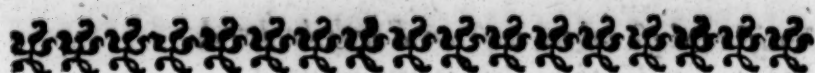
THEATRE-ROYAL



By the late JAMES THOMSON.

L O N D O N.

Printed for A. MILLAR at Pall-mall in  
the Strand, near the Theatre.



## P R O L O G U E

Spoken by Mr. QUIN.

*I* Come not here your Candour to implore  
For Scenes, whose Author is, alas! no more;  
He wants no Advocate his Cause to plead;  
You will yourselves be Patrons of the Dead.  
No Party his Benevolence confin'd,  
No Sect—alike it flow'd to all Mankind,  
He lov'd his Friends (forgive this gushing Tear :  
Alas! I feel I am no Actor here)  
He lov'd his Friends with such a Warmth of Heart,  
So clear of Int'rest, so devoid of Art,  
Such generous Freedom, such unshaken Zeal,  
No Words can speak it, but our Tears may tell.—  
O candid Truth, O Faith without a Stain,  
O Manners gently firm, and nobly plain,  
O sympathizing Love of others Bliss,  
Where will you find another Breast like His?—  
Such was the Man—the Poet well you know :  
Oft has he touch'd your Hearts with tender Woe :  
Oft in this crouded House with just Applause  
You heard him teach fair Virtue's purest Laws;  
For his chaste Muse employ'd her Heav'n-taught Lyre  
None but the noblest Passions to inspire,  
Not one immoral, one corrupted Thought,  
One Line, which dying he could wish to blot.  
Oh may To-night your favourable Doom  
Another Laurel add to grace his Tomb :  
Whilst he, superior now to Praise or Blame,  
Hears not the feeble Voice of Human Fame.

Yet



## PROLOGUE.

*Yet if to those whom most on Earth he lov'd,  
From whom his pious Care is now remov'd,  
With whom his liberal Hand, and bounteous Heart  
Shar'd all his little Fortune could impart,  
If to those Friends your kind Regard shall give  
What they no longer can from His receive,  
That, that, even now, above yon starry Pole,  
May touch with Pleasure his immortal Soul.*





# EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY

Mrs. *WOFFINGTON*.

*WELL! Gentlemen! and are you still so vain  
To treat our Sex with arrogant Disdain,  
And think, to you alone by partial Heav'n  
Superior Sense and sovereign Pow'r are given,  
When in the Story told To-night, you find,  
With what a boundless Sway we rule the Mind,  
And, by a few soft Words of ours, with Ease,  
Can turn the proudest Hearts just where we please?  
If an old Mother had such pow'rful Charms, —  
To stop a stubborn Roman's conquering Arms, —  
Soldiers and Statesmen of these Days, with you  
What think you wou'd a fair young Mistress do?  
If with my grave Discourse, and wrinkled Face,  
I thus could bring a Hero to Disgrace,  
How absolutely may I hope to reign  
Now I am turn'd to my own Shape again!  
However, I will use my Empire well;  
And, if I have a certain magic Spell*

*Of*

## EPILOGUE.

*Or in my Tongue, or Wit, or Shape, or Eyes,  
Which can subdue the Strong, and fool the Wise,  
Be not alarm'd : I will not interfere  
In State-Affairs, nor undertake to steer  
The Helm of Government, — as we are told  
Those Female Politicians did of old :  
Such dangerous Heights I never wish'd to climb —  
Thank Heav'n ! I better can employ my Time —  
Ask you to what my Pow'r I shall apply?  
To make my Subjects blest, is my Reply.  
My Purposes are gracious all, and kind.  
Some may be told — and some may be divin'd :  
One, which at present I have most at Heart,  
To you without Reserve I will impart :  
It is my Sovereign Will, — Hear, and obey, —  
That you with Candour treat this Orphan Play.*





# The Persons Represented.

CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS.	} Mr. Quin.
ATTIUS TULLUS, General of the <i>Volsian</i> Army.	} Mr. Ryan.
GALESUS, one of the Deputies of the <i>Volsian</i> States attending the Camp.	} Mr. Delane.
The other Deputies of the <i>Volsian</i> States.	
VOLUSIUS, one of the Principal <i>Volsian</i> Officers.	} Mr. Sparks.
TITUS, Freed-man of GALE-SUS.	} Mr. Ridout.
MARCUS MINUCIUS, Consul and Principal of the Deputation from <i>Rome</i> to CORIO-LANUS.	} Mr. Bridgewater.
POSTHUMUS COMINIUS, a Con-sular Senator, one of the De-putation, and who had been the <i>Roman</i> General at the taking of <i>Corioli</i> .	} Mr. Anderson.
VETURIA, Mother of CORIO-LANUS.	} Mrs. Woffington.
VOLUMNIA, Wife of CORIO-LANUS.	} Miss Bellamy.
<i>Roman</i> Senators, Priests, Augurs, &c. of the first Deputation. <i>Roman</i> Ladies, in the Train of VETURIA and VOLUMNIA, of the second Deputation.	

*Volsian* OFFICERS, LICTORS, SOLDIERS, &c.

SCENE, The *Volsian* Camp.

# The Persons Represented.

Capt. M. J. Connelley, M. J. Connelley

Atty. Gen. J. J. Connelley, M. J. Connelley

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CORIOLANUS.  
A  
TRAGEDY.

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ACT I. SCENE I.

*The Volscian Camp.*

ATTIUS TULLUS, VOLUSIUS.

VOLUSIUS.

**W**HENCE is it, TULLUS, that our Arms are stopt  
Here on the Borders of the *Roman* State?  
Why sleeps that Spirit, whose Heroic Ardour  
Urg'dy ou to break the Truce, and pour'd our Host,  
From all th'united Cantons of the *Volsci*,  
On their unguarded Frontier? Such Designs  
Brook not an Hour's Delay; their whole Success  
Depends on instant vigorous Execution.

TULLUS.

VOLUSIUS, I approve thy brave Impatience;  
And will to thee, in Confidence of Friendship,  
Disclose my secret Soul. Thou know'st GALESIUS,  
B Whose



Whose Freedom CAIUS MARCIUS, once his Guest,  
Of all the Spoil of sack'd *Corioli*,  
Alone demanded; and who thence to *Rome*,  
From Gratitude and Friendship, follow'd MARCIUS;  
Whence lately to our *Antium* he return'd,  
With Overtures of Peace propos'd by *Rome*.

VOLUSIUS.

I know him well; an antiquated Sage  
Of that romantic School, *Pythagoras*  
Establish'd here on our *Hesperian* Shore;  
Whose gentle Dictates only serve to tame  
Enfeebled Mortals into Slaves.

TULLUS.

GALESUS,

Doubtless, possesses many civil Virtues;  
Is gentle, good; for Rectitude of Heart  
And Innocence of Life by all rever'd.

VOLUSIUS.

Pardon me, TULLUS, if my faithful Bluntness  
Deems you too lib'ral in his Praise. In Peace  
Such may perhaps do well, when Prating rules  
An idle World; but in tempestuous Times  
They are stark naught, these visionary Statesmen,  
Fit Rulers only for their golden Age.  
The rugged Genius of rapacious *Rome*  
For other Men, and other Counsels, calls.

TULLUS.

Your Thoughts are mine—I only meant to tell thee  
The Part he bears in this ill-tim'd Delay.

Soon as our gather'd Army march'd from *Antium*,  
The *Roman* Senate, whose attentive Caution  
Watch'd all our Motions, took at once th' Alarm  
And sent a Herald, ere we past their Borders,  
With formal Ceremony, to demand  
The Cause of our Approach.—Had I been Master,  
I would have answer'd at the Gates of *Rome*.  
But this GALESUS, who attends our Camp  
Among the *Volscian* Deputies, so pleaded

The

The Laws of Nations, made such loud Complaints  
 Against th'Infraction of the Publick Faith,  
 So teaz'd us with the Pedantry of States,  
 That I was forc'd, unwilling, to permit  
 His Freedman, TITUS, to be sent to *Rome*  
 With our Demands. If these the Senate grants,  
 We then are in the Toils of Peace entangled,  
 In spite of all my Efforts to avoid them.

VOLUSIUS.

O 'tis a wild Chimera! Peace with *Rome*!  
 Dream not of that, unless the *Volscian* Courage  
 Be quite subdu'd, and only seeks to gild  
 A vile Submission with that specious Name.  
 Learn Wisdom from your Neighbours. Peace with  
*Rome*

Has quell'd the *Latines*, tam'd their free-born Spirit,  
 And by her Friendship honour'd them with Chains.

TULLUS.

She ne'er will grant it on the just Conditions  
 I now have brought the *Volsi* to demand:  
 The Restitution of our conquer'd Cities,  
 And fair Alliance upon equal Terms.  
 I know the *Roman* Insolence will scorn  
 To yield to this: and TITUS must return  
 Within three Days, the longest Term allow'd him;  
 Of which the Third is near elaps'd already.  
 Then even GALESUS will not dare to stop us,  
 With superstitious Forms, and solemn Trifles,  
 From letting loose th'unbridled Rage of War  
 Against those hated Tyrants of *Hesperia*.

VOLUSIUS.

Thanks to the Gods! my Sword will then be free.  
 Then, poor *Corioli*! thy bleeding Wounds,  
 Thy Treasures sack'd, thy captivated Matrons,  
 Shall amply be reveng'd by thy VOLUSIUS:  
 Then, TULLUS, from the lofty Brows of MARCIUS  
 Thou may'st regain the wreaths his conquering hand,  
 By

By partial Fortune aided, tore from thine.

TULLUS.

O my VOLUSIUS! thou, who art a Soldier,  
A try'd and brave one too, say, in thy Heart  
Dost thou not scorn me? thou, who sav'st me bend  
Beneath the half-spent Thunder of a Foe,  
Warm from the Conquest of *Corioli*,  
Which, rushing furious in with those, whose Sally  
He had repell'd, he seiz'd almost alone;  
And gave to Fire and Sword. Yet thence he flew,  
Scorning the Plunder of our richest City,  
His Wounds undrest, without a Moment's Respite,  
To where our Armies on the fearful Edge  
Of Battle stood; and, asking of the Consul  
To be oppos'd to me, with mighty Rage,  
Resistless, bore us down.

VOLUSIUS.

True Valour, TULLUS,  
Lies in the Mind, the never-yielding Purpose,  
Nor owns the blind Award of giddy Fortune.

TULLUS.

My Soul, my Friend, my Soul is all on Fire!  
Thirst of Revenge consumes me! the Revenge  
Of generous Emulation, not of Hatred.  
This happy *Roman*, this proud MARCIUS haunts me.  
Each troubled Night when Slaves and Captives sleep,  
Forgetful of their Chains, I, in my Dreams,  
Anew am vanquish'd; and, beneath his Sword  
With Horror sinking, feel a tenfold Death,  
The Death of Honour. But I will redeem—  
Yes, MARCIUS, I will yet redeem my Fame.  
To face thee once again is the great Purpose  
For which alone I live.—Till then how slow,  
How tedious lags the Time! while Shame corrodes  
me,  
With many a bitter Thought; and injur'd Honour  
Sick, and desponding, preys upon itself.

VOLUSIUS.



# C O R I O L A N U S.

5

VOLUSIUS.

It fast approaches now, the Hour of Vengeance,  
To this fam'd Land, to ancient *Latium* due.  
Unballanc'd *Rome*, at Variance with herself,  
To Order lost, in deep and hot Commotion,  
Stands on the dangerous Point of civil War;  
Her haughty Nobles and seditious Commons  
Reviling, fearing, hating one another:  
While, on our part, all wears a prosperous Face:  
Our Troops united, numerous, high in Spirit,  
As if their Gen'ral's Soul inform'd them all.  
O long-expected Day!

TULLUS.

Go, brave VOLUSIUS,  
Go breathe thy Ardour into every Breast,  
That when the *Volscian* Envoy shall return,  
Whom ere the Close of Evening I expect,  
One Spirit may unite us in the Cause  
Of generous Freedom, and our native Rights,  
So long oppress'd by *Rome's* encroaching Power.



## S C E N E II.

TULLUS *alone.*

GALESUS said that MARCIUS stands for Consul.  
O favour thou his suit, propitious *Jove*!  
That I may brave him at his Army's Head,  
In all the Majesty of sovereign Pow'r!  
That the whole Conduct of the War may rest  
On us alone, and prove by its Decision,  
Which of the two is worthiest to command—



## S C E N E III.

TULLUS, OFFICER.

TULLUS.

Ha! why this Haste? you look alarm'd.

OFFICER.

My Lord,  
 One of exalted Port, his Visage hid,  
 Has plac'd himself upon your sacred Hearth,  
 Beneath the dread Protection of your *Lares*;  
 And sits majestic there in solemn Silence.

TULLUS.

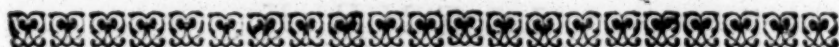
Did you not ask him who, and what he was?

OFFICER.

My Lord, I could not speak; I felt appall'd,  
 As if the Presence of some God had struck me.

TULLUS.

Come, Dastard! let me find this Man of Terrors.



## S C E N E IV.

*The back Scene opens, and discovers CORIOLANUS  
 as described above.*

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS.

TULLUS, *after some Silence.*

Illustrious Stranger—for thy high Demeanour  
 Bespeaks thee such—who art thou?

CORIOLANUS.

# CORIO LANUS.

7

CORIO LANUS.

[*Rising and unmuffling his Face.*

View me, TULLUS—

[*After some pause.*

Dost thou not know me?

TULLUS.

No. That noble Front  
I never saw before. What is thy Name?

CORIO LANUS.

Does not the secret Voice of hostile Instinct,  
Does not thy swelling Heart declare me to thee?

TULLUS.

Gods! can it be?—

CORIO LANUS.

Yes. I am CAIUS MARCIUS;

Known to thy smarting Country by the Name  
Of CORIO LANUS. That alone is left me,  
That empty Name, for all my Toils, my Service,  
The Blood which I have shed for thankless *Rome*.  
Behold me banish'd thence, a Victim yielded  
By her weak Nobles to the maddening Rabble.  
I seek Revenge. Thou may'st employ my Sword,  
With keener Edge, with heavier Force against her,  
Than e'er it fell upon the *Volscian* Nation.  
But if thou, TULLUS, dost refuse me this,  
The only Wish of my collected Heart,  
Where every Passion in one burning Point  
Concenters, give me Death: Death from thy Hand  
I sure have well deserv'd—Nor shall I blush  
To take or Life or Death from ATTIVS TULLUS.

TULLUS.

O CAIUS MARCIUS! in this one short Moment,  
That we have friendly talk'd, my ravish'd Heart  
Has undergone a great, a wonderful Change.  
I ever held thee in my best Esteem ;  
But this Heroic Confidence has won me,  
Stamp'd me at once thy Friend. I were indeed

B 4

A Wretch



A Wretch as mean as this thy Trust is noble,  
 Could I refuse thee thy Demand—Yes, MARCIUS!  
 Thou hast thy Wish! take half of my Command:  
 If that be not enough, then take the whole.  
 We have, my Friend, a gallant Force on Foot,  
 An Army, MARCIUS, fit to follow thee.  
 Go, lead them on, and take thy full Revenge.  
 All should unite to punish the Ungrateful.  
 Ingratitude is Treason to Mankind.

C O R I O L A N U S, *embracing him.*

Thus, generous TULLUS, take a Soldier's Thanks,  
 Who is not practis'd in the Gloss of Words—  
 Thou Friend indeed! Friend to my Cause, my  
 Quarrel!

Friend to the darling Passion of my Soul!  
 All else I set at nought!—Immortal Gods!  
 I am new-made, and wonder at myself!  
 A little while ago, and I was nothing;  
 A powerless Reptile, crawling on the Earth,  
 Curs'd with a Soul that restless wish'd to wield  
 The Bolts of *Jove*! I dwelt in *Erebus*,  
 I wander'd through the hopeless Glooms of Hell,  
 Stung with Revenge, tormented by the Furies!  
 Now, TULLUS, like a God, you draw me thence,  
 Throne me amidst the Skies, with Tempest charg'd,  
 And put the ready Thunder in my Hand!

TULLUS.

What I have promis'd, MARCIUS, I will do.  
 Within an Hour at farthest we expect  
 The Freedman of GALEBUS back from *Rome*,  
 Who carry'd to the Senate our Demands.  
 Their Answer will, I doubt not, end the Truce,  
 And instant draw our angry Swords against them.  
 Till then retire within my inmost Tent,  
 Unknown to all but me, that when our Chiefs  
 Meet in full Council to declare for War,  
 I may produce thee to their wondering Eyes,

As

As if descended from avenging Heaven  
To humble lofty *Rome*, and teach her Justice.

CORIOLANUS.

To thy Direction, TULLUS, I resign  
My future Life: my Fate is in thy Hands;  
And, if I judge aright, the Fate of *Rome*.

*The End of the First Act.*



ACT



## A C T II.

## S C E N E I.

GALESUS, TITUS.

GALESUS.

**I**NDEED! my TITUS, I had Hopes that *Rome*,  
 Vext as she is with her domestic Broils,  
 Her Frontier weak, her Armies unprepar'd,  
 Might have comply'd with our Demands, and given  
 us

The same Alliance granted to the *Latines*.

TITUS.

The Senate scarce would hear the Terms I offer'd;  
 But order'd me to bear this Answer back:

“ If first the *Volsci* take up Arms, the *Romans*  
 “ Will be the last to lay them down.”

GALESUS.

Alas!

This Answer seals the Doom of many a Wretch.  
 Unchain'd *Bellona* from her Temple rushes,  
 With all the Crimes and Vices in her Train.  
 Earth fades at her Approach. To rural Peace,  
 Fair Plenty, and the social Joy of Cities,  
 Soon will succeed Rage, Rapine, Devastation,  
 Each cruel Horror sanctify'd by Names.

O Mortals! Mortals! when will you, content  
 With Nature's Bounty, that in fuller Flow,  
 Still as your Labours open more its Sources,  
 Abundant gushes o'er the happy World;

When



# C O R I O L A N U S. 11

When will you banish Violence, and Outrage,  
To dwell with Beasts of Prey in Woods and Defarts?

TITUS.

Never till *Rome* shall change her conquering Maxims.

GALESUS.

Her haughty Spirit now will soar beyond  
Its usual Pitch, upborne by CAIUS MARCIUS.  
Stands he not for the Consulate?

TITUS.

He did.

But is no more a Citizen of *Rome*.

GALESUS.

What mean'st thou, TITUS?

TITUS.

MARCIUS is from *Rome*

Banish'd for ever.

GALESUS.

O immortal Powers!

On what Pretence could they to Exile doom  
Their wisest Captain, and their bravest Soldier?  
Nor less renown'd for Piety, for Justice,  
An uncorrupted Heart, and purest Manners.

TITUS.

The Charge against him was entirely groundless,  
What not his Enemies themselves believ'd,  
Affecting of tyrannic Power in *Rome*.

His real Crime was only some hot Words,  
Struck from his fiery Temper, in the Senate,  
Against those factious Ministers of Discord,  
The Tribunes of the People. They to Rage,  
And frantic Fury, rous'd the mad Plebeians;  
By whom supported in their bold Attempt,  
They durst presume to summon to the Bar  
Of an enrag'd and partial Populace,  
The most illustrious Senator of *Rome*.  
To this the Nobles yielded—and, with his,  
Gave up their own and Childrens Rights for ever.

GALESUS.

O shameful Weakness in a *Roman* Senate,  
 So much renown'd for Firmness! Yet, my *TITUS*,  
 Spite of my Love to *MARCIUS*, I must own it,  
 The vigorous Soil whence his Heroic Virtues  
 Luxuriant rise, if not with careful Hand  
 Severely weeded, teems with Imperfections.  
 His lofty Spirit brooks no Opposition.  
 His Rage, if once offended, knows no Bounds;  
 He deems Plebeians, with Patrician Blood  
 Compar'd, the Creatures of a lower Species,  
 Mere menial Hands by Nature meant to serve him.

TITUS.

It was this high Patrician Pride undid him.  
 The furious People triumph'd in his Ruin  
 As if they had expell'd another *Tarquin* :  
 While, like a captive Train, the vanquish'd Nobles  
 Hung their dejected Heads in silent Shame.  
*MARCIUS* alone seem'd unconcern'd; tho' deep  
 The latent Tempest boil'd within his Breast,  
 Choak'd up and smother'd with excessive Rage.

GALESUS.

You were his Guest at *Rome*, and therefore, *TITUS*,  
 Might on this sad Occasion be permitted  
 To join your Tears with his domestic Friends.  
 Saw you that moving Scene?

TITUS.

I did, *GALESUS*.

I follow'd *MARCIUS* home—His Mother, there,  
*VETURIA*, the most venerable Matron  
 These Eyes have e'er beheld, and soft *VOLUMNIA*,  
 His lovely, virtuous Wife, amidst his Children,  
 Spread on the Ground, lay lost in dumb Despair.  
 He swelling stood a while, and could not speak,  
 Th'affronted Hero struggling with the Man;  
 Then thus at last he broke the gloomy Silence:  
 " 'Tis done. The guilty Sentence is pronounc'd.  
 " Ungrateful *Rome* has cast me from her Bosom.  
 " Support

“ Support this Blow with Fortitude and Courage,  
 “ As it becomes two generous *Roman* Matrons.  
 “ I recommend my Children to your Care.  
 “ Farewel. I go, I quit, without Regret,  
 “ A City grown an Enemy to Virtue.”

GALESUS.

Oh godlike MARCIUS! oh unconquer'd Strength  
 And Dignity of Mind! How much superior  
 Is such a Soul to all the Power of Fortune!

TITUS.

This said, he sternly try'd to break away:  
 When, holding in her Hand his eldest Son,  
 VETURIA follow'd; while the poor VOLUMNIA,  
 All drown'd in Tears, and bearing in one Arm  
 Their youngest, yet an Infant, with the other  
 Hung clinging at his Knees—he, turning to them,  
 Half soften'd, half severe, breath'd from his Soul  
 These broken Accents—“ Cease your vain Com-  
 “ plaints.

“ Mother, you have no more a Son; and thou,  
 “ 'Thou best of Women! thou, my dear VOLUMNIA!  
 “ No more a Husband”—Pierc'd with these dire  
 Words,

VOLUMNIA lifeless sunk: and off he flung,  
 With wild Precipitation.

GALESUS.

Thy sad Tale  
 Blinds my old Eyes with Tears—But whither, tell me,  
 O whither, TITUS, bent he then his Course?

TITUS.

Where the blind Genius of regardless Rage  
 And Desperation led. On to the Gate,  
*Capena* call'd, attended by the Nobles,  
 He stalk'd in sullen Majesty along;  
 Nor deign'd a Word. A godlike virtuous Anger  
 Beam'd thro' his Features, and sublim'd his Air.  
 With downcast Eyes he walk'd; or if aside  
 He chanc'd to look, each Look was great Reproach.  
 Thus



Thus in emphatic Silence, that made Words  
Void and insipid all, he parted from them,  
The Day preceding my Return from *Rome*;  
Nor has been heard of since, lost in th'Abyſs  
Of his own Woes.

GALESUS.

O MARCIUS, noble MARCIUS!  
How shall my Friendship succour thy Distress?  
Where shall I find thee, to partake thy Sorrows,  
And make myself Companion of thy Exile?

But, TITUS, we indulge Discourse too long—  
Go, and assemble thou the *Volscian* Chiefs,  
Whilst I repair to TULLUS, to inform,  
And bring him to the Council, there to hear  
The fatal Answer thou hast brought from *Rome*.

\*\*\*

## SCENE II.

*Changes to TULLUS's Tent.*

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS.

CORIOLANUS.

Forgive me, TULLUS, if I count the Moments  
That stop the Purpose of thy noble Kindness,  
And keep me here confin'd in tame Inaction.  
Why lingers TITUS?

TULLUS.

Calm thy restless Heart,  
Brave MARCIUS; every Minute I expect him.  
Soon from the Cloud that hides thee, shalt thou break  
With double Brightness; soon thy fiery Rage  
Shall wither all the Strength and Pride of *Rome*.

CORIOLANUS.

O righteous *Jove*, Protector of the Injur'd!  
If from my earliest Youth, with pious Awe,  
I still have reverenc'd thy all-powerful Justice,  
Still by her sacred Dictates rul'd my Actions,

O let

O let that Justice now support my Cause,  
And arm my strong Right-hand with all her Terrors!  
When that is done, be Life or Death my Lot,  
As thy almighty Pleasure shall determine.

[Enter an Officer to TULLUS.

OFFICER.

My Lord, GALESUS asks Admittance to you.

TULLUS.

MARCIUS, retire an Instant, till I hear  
The Business brings him hither—Bid him enter.

[Exit Officer and CORIOLANUS.

[Enter GALESUS.



S C E N E III.

TULLUS, GALESUS.

GALESUS.

TULLUS, the *Roman* Senate has return'd  
No other Answer, to our late Demands,  
But absolute Denial and Defiance.

TULLUS.

It is what I expected—We shall teach them  
An humbler Language soon—Hast thou assembled,  
As I desir'd, the *Volscian* Chiefs in Council?

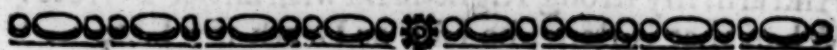
GALESUS.

TITUS is gone to summon their Attendance.

TULLUS.

It is enough—Come forth, my noble Guest!  
And shew GALESUS how the Gods assist us.

S C E N E



## SCENE IV.

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS, GALESUS.

GALESUS.

O My astonish'd Soul! what do I see?  
 What! CAIUS MARCIUS! CAIUS MARCIUS here,  
 Beneath one Tent with TULLUS?

TULLUS.

Ay, and more,  
 With TULLUS, now his Friend and fellow Soldier,  
 Yes, thou shalt see him thundering at the Head  
 Of *Volscian* Armies; he, who oft has carry'd  
 Destruction thro' their Ranks—Your Leave a Mo-  
 ment,  
 While to our Chiefs, and Fathers, I announce  
 Their unexpected Guest.



## SCENE V.

CORIOLANUS, GALESUS.

CORIOLANUS.

Thou good old Man!  
 Close let me strain thee to my faithful Heart,  
 Which now is doubly thine, united more  
 By the Protection which thy Country gives me,  
 Than by our former Friendship.

GALESUS.

Strange Event!  
 This is thy Work, almighty Providence!  
 Whose Power, beyond the Stretch of human Thought,

I

Revolves



Revolves the Orbs of Empire; bids them sink  
Deep in the deadning Night of thy Displeasure,  
Or rise majestic o'er a wondering World.

The Gods by thee—I see it, CORIOLANUS,—  
Mean to exalt us, and depress the *Romans*.

C O R I O L A N U S.

GALESUS, yes, the Gods have sent me hither;  
Those righteous Gods, who, when vindictive Justice  
Excites them to destroy a worthless People,  
Make their own Crimes and Follies strike the Blow.

GALESUS.

Cherish these Thoughts, that teach us what we are,  
And tame the Pride of Man. There is a Power,  
Unseen that rules th'illimitable World,  
That guides its Motions, from the brightest Star,  
To the least Dust of this sin-tainted Mold;  
While Man, who madly deems himself the Lord  
Of all, is nought but Weakness and Dependance.  
This sacred Truth, by sure Experience taught,  
Thou must have learnt, when, wandering all alone,  
Each Bird, each Insect, flitting thro' the Sky,  
Was more sufficient for itself, than thou—  
Ah the full Image of thy Woes dissolves me!  
The Pangs that must have torn, at parting from thee,  
Thy Mother and thy Wife. I cannot think  
Of that sad Scene without some Drops of Pity!

C O R I O L A N U S.

Who was it forc'd me to that bitter Parting?  
Who, in one cruel hasty Moment, chas'd me  
From Wife, from Children, Friends, and Household  
Gods,

Me! who so often had protected theirs?  
Who, from the sacred City of my Fathers  
Drove me with Nature's Commoners to dwell,  
To lodge beneath their wide unshelter'd Roof,  
And at their Table feed? O blast me, Gods!  
With ev'ry Woe! Debility of Mind,  
Dishonour, just Contempt, and palsy'd Weakness,

C

If

If I forgive the Villains! yes GALEsus,  
 Yes, I will offer to the Powers of Vengeance  
 A great, a glorious Victim—a whole City!—  
 Why, TULLus, this Delay?

GALESUS.

May CORIOLANUS

Be to the *Volscian* Nation, and himself,  
 The dread, the godlike Instrument of Justice!  
 But let not Rage and Vengeance mix their Rancour;  
 Let them not trouble with their fretful Storm,  
 Their angry Gleams, that Azure, where enthron'd  
 The calm Divinity of Justice sits  
 And pities, while she punishes, Mankind.

CORIOLANUS.

What saidst thou? What, against the Powers of  
 Vengeance?

The Gods gave honest Anger, just Revenge,  
 To be the awful Guardians of the Rights  
 And native Dignity of Human kind.

O were it not for them, the saucy World  
 Would grow a noisome Nest of little Tyrants!  
 Each Carrion Crow, on Eagle Merit perch'd,  
 Would peck his Eyes out, and the mungril Cur  
 At pleasure bait the Lyon—No, GALEsus,  
 I would not rashly, nor on light Occasion,  
 Receive the deep Impression in my Breast;  
 But when the Base, the Brutal and Unjust,  
 Or worse than all, th'Ungrateful, stamp it there,  
 O I will then with Luxury supreme,  
 Enjoy the Pleasure of offended Gods,  
 A righteous, just Revenge!—Behold my Soul.

[Enter an Officer.

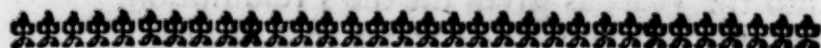
OFFICER.

My Lords, th'assembled Chiefs desire your Presence.

GALESUS.

Come, noble MARCIUS; let my joyful Hand  
 Conduct thee thither—Doubt not thy Reception  
 Will be proportion'd to thy Fame and Merit.

S C E N E



S C E N E VI.

*The back Scene opens, and discovers the Deputies of the Volscian States, assembled in Council. They rise and salute CORIOLANUS; then resume their Places.*

GALESUS, TULLUS, CORIOLANUS, SENATORS.

GALESUS.

Assembled States, and Captains of the *Volsci*,  
Behold the Chief so much renown'd in War;  
Our once so formidable Foe, but now  
Our proffer'd Friend and Soldier—CAIUS MARCIUS;

I<sup>st</sup> SENATOR.

We give him hearty Welcome, from our Souls!

CORIOLANUS.

Most noble Chiefs, and Fathers of the *Volsci*,  
I need not say, how by the People's Rage,  
And the poor Weakness of the timid Nobles,  
I am expell'd from *Rome*. Had I confin'd  
My Wishes merely to a safe Retreat,  
Some *Latine* City might have given me that;  
Or any nameless Corner. What imports it,  
Where a tame patient Exile rots in Silence?  
But, *Volscian* Lords, permit me to declare,  
I would at once cut short my useless Days,  
Rather than be that despicable Wretch,  
Who neither can take Vengeance on his Foes,  
Nor serve his Friends. That is my Temper, Chiefs.  
I shall be glad to merit, by my Sword,  
Th' Asylum which I seek among the *Volsci*.  
*Rome* is our common Foe: Then let us join  
Our common Suffering, Passions, and Resentments.  
Yes, tho' but one, I bring so many Wrongs,  
So large a Share of powerful Enmity,



Into the War, as gives me the Presumption,  
To offer to the *Volscian* States th' Alliance  
Even of my single Arm.—

TULLUS.

That single Arm  
Is in itself a numerous Army, MARCIUS;  
The *Volscians* so esteem it—But proceed.

CORIO-  
CORIOLANUS.

I will not mention, *Volscian* Chiefs, what Talent  
The World allows me to possess in War:  
But be it what it will, you may employ it.  
Soldier, or Captain, in whatever Station  
You place me, I will lose each Drop of Blood,  
Or with this Hand I'll fix the *Volscian* Standard  
On the proud Towers of Capitoline Jove.

TULLUS.

Chiefs of the *Volscian* League, I give you Joy  
Of our new Citizen, the noble MARCIUS.  
The Genius of the *Volscian* State has sent him,  
Whetted by Wrongs into a keener Hatred  
Than that we bear to Rome. It were contemning,  
With impious self-sufficient Arrogance,  
This Bounty of the Gods, not to accept,  
With every Mark of Honour, of his Service.  
I, *Volscians*, I, even ARTIUS TULLUS, give,  
First of you all, my Voice, that CAIUS MARCIUS  
Be now receiv'd to high Command among us;  
That instantly we do appoint him General  
Of half our Troops, which here, with your Consent,  
I to him yield.—Speak, Chiefs, is this your Pleasure?

I<sup>st</sup> SENATOR.

It is,—We give unanimous Consent.

TULLUS, embracing him.

MARCIUS, I joy to call thee my Companion,  
And Collegue in this War.

CORIO-

CORIOLANUS.

By all the Gods!

Thou art the generous Victor of my Soul!  
 Yes, TULLUS, I am conquer'd by thy Virtue.

GALESUS.

Tho' I have oft, on great Occasions, TULLUS,  
 Beheld thee in the Senate, and the Field,  
 Cover'd with Glory; yet, I must avow,  
 I never saw thee shew such genuine Greatness,  
 Such true Sublimity of Soul, as now.  
 To scorn th' all-powerful Charm of selfish Passions,  
 Chiefly the dazzling Pride of Emulation,  
 That noble Weakness of Heroic Minds,  
 To sink thyself that thou may'st raise thy Country;  
 To put the Sword into thy Rival's Hand,  
 And twine thy promis'd Laurels round his Brow—  
 O 'tis a Flight beyond the highest Point  
 Of Martial Glory! and what few can reach.  
 Go forth, the chosen Ministers of Justice;  
 And may that awful Power, whose secret Hand  
 Sways all our Passions, turns our partial Views  
 All to its own dread Purposes, attend you!

CORIOLANUS.

I burn to enter on the glorious Task  
 You now have mark'd me out. How slow the Time  
 To the warm Soul, that in the very Instant  
 It forms, would execute, a great Design.  
 'Tis my Advice we march direct to *Rome*;  
 We cannot be too quick. Let the first Dawn  
 See us in bright Array before her Walls.  
 Perhaps when they behold their Exile there,  
 Back'd by your Force, some conscious Hearts among  
 them  
 May feel th' Alarm of Guilt.

TULLUS.

I much approve  
 Of this Advice. 'Tis what I thought before,  
 Ere strengthen'd, MARCIUS, by thy mighty Arm:

C. 3

But

But now 'tis doubly right. Here, *Volsian* Chiefs,  
Here let our Council terminate—The Troops  
Have had Repose sufficient. Strait to *Rome*,  
Come, let us urge our March—As yet the Stars  
Ride in their middle Watch: we shall with Ease,  
Reach it by Dawn.—

CORIOLANUS,

Yes, we have time—too much!  
Six tedious Hours till Morn—But hence! away!  
My Soul on Fire anticipates the Dawn.

*End of the Second Act:*



ACT





## A C T III.

## S C E N E I.

CORIANUS, TULLUS, VOLUSIUS, TITUS, *with a Croud of Volscian Officers. Acclamations behind the Scenes.*

CORIANUS.

**N**O more—I merit not this lavish Praise.  
 True, we have driven the *Roman* Legions back,  
 Defeated, and disgrac'd—But what is this?  
 Nothing, ye *Volsci*, nothing yet is done.  
 We but begin the wonderous Leaf of Story,  
 That marks the *Roman* Doom. At length it dawns,  
 The destin'd Hour, that eases of their Fears  
 The Nations round, and sets *Hesperia* free.  
 Come on, my brave Companions of the War!  
 Come, let us finish at one mighty Stroke,  
 This Toil of labouring Fate—We will, or perish!  
 While, noble TULLUS, you protect the Camp,  
 I, with my Troops, all Men of chosen Valour,  
 And well-approv'd to-day, will storm the City.

TITUS.

Beneath thy animating Conduct, MARCIUS,  
 What can the *Volscian* Valour not perform.  
 Thy very Sight and Voice subdues the *Romans*.  
 When, lifting up your Helm, you shew'd your Face,  
 That like a Comet glar'd Destruction on them,  
 I saw their bravest Veterans fly before thee.  
 Their ancient Spirit has with thee forsook them,  
 And Ruin hangs o'er yon devoted Walls.

[Enter an Officer, who addresses himself to Coriolanus.]

C 4

OFFICER.

OFFICER.

My Lord, a Herald is arriv'd from *Rom*,  
 To say, a Deputation from the Senate,  
 Attended by the Ministers of Heaven,  
 A venerable Train of Priests and Flamens,  
 Is on the Way, address'd to you.

CORIOLANUS.

To me!

What can this Message mean!—Stand to your Arms,  
 Ye *Volscian* Troops; and let these *Romans* pass  
 Betwixt the lowring Frown of double Files.  
 What! do they think me such a milky Boy,  
 To pay my Vengeance with a few soft Words.  
 Come, fellow Soldiers, TULLUS, come, and see,  
 If I betray the Honours you have done me.

[Goes out with a Train of Volscian Officers.]



## SCENE II.

TULLUS, VOLUSIUS, *who remain.*

VOLUSIUS, *after some Silence,*  
 Are we not, TULLUS, failing in our Duty  
 Not to attend our General?

TULLUS.

How! What saidst thou?

VOLUSIUS.

Methought, my Lord, his parting Orders were,  
 We should attend the Triumph now preparing  
 O'er all his Foes at once—*Romans* and *Volsci*!  
 Come, we shall give Offence.

TULLUS.

Of this no more.

I pray thee spare thy bitter Irony.

VOLUSIUS.

VOLUSIUS.

Shall I then speak without Disguise?

TULLUS.

Speak out :

With all the honest Bluntness of a Friend.

Think'st thou I fear the Truth?

VOLUSIUS.

Then, TULLUS, know,

Thou art no more the General of the *Volsi*.

Thou hast, by this thy generous Weakness, sunk  
Thyself into a private Man of *Antium*.

Yes, thou hast taken from thy laurel'd Brow  
The well-earn'd Trophies of thy Toils and Perils,  
Thy springing Hopes, the fairest ever budded,  
And heap'd them on a Man too proud before.

TULLUS.

He bears it high.

VOLUSIUS,

Death, and Perdition! high!

With uncontroul'd Command!—You see, already,  
He will not be encumber'd with the Fetters  
Of our Advice. He speaks his Sovereign Will ;  
On every Hand he issues out his Orders,  
As to his natural Slaves.—For you, my Lord,  
He has, I think, confin'd you to your Camp,  
There in inglorious Indolence to languish;  
While he, beneath your blasted Eye, shall reap  
The Harvest of your Honour.

TULLUS.

No, VOLUSIUS,

Whatever Honour shall by him be gain'd  
Reverts to me, from whose superior Bounty  
He drew the Means of all his glorious Deeds.  
This mighty Chief, this Conqueror of *Rome*  
Is but my Creature.—

VOLUSIUS.

Wretched Self-Delusion ;

He and the *Volsians* know he is thy Master.

He



He acts as such in all Things—Now by *Mars*,  
 Could my abhorrent Soul endure the Thought  
 Of stooping to a *Roman* Chief, I here  
 Would leave thee in thy solitary Camp,  
 And go where Glory calls.

TULLUS.

Indeed, VOLUSIUS,  
 I did expect more equal Treatment from him.  
 But what of that?—The generous Pride of Virtue  
 Disdains to weigh too nicely the Returns  
 Her Bounty meets with—Like the liberal Gods,  
 From her own gracious Nature she bestows,  
 Nor stoops to ask Reward—Yet must I own,  
 I thought he would not have so soon forgot  
 What he so lately was, and what I am.

VOLUSIUS.

Gods! knew ye not his Character before?  
 Did you not know his Genius was to yours  
 Averse, as are Antipathies in Nature?  
 High, over-weening, tyrannously Proud,  
 And only fit to hold Command o'er Slaves?  
 Hence, as repugnant to that equal Life,  
 Which is the quickening Soul of all Republicks,  
 The *Roman* People cast him forth; and we,  
 Shall we receive the Bane of their Repose,  
 Into our Breast? Are we less free than they?  
 Or shall we be more patient of a Tyrant?

TULLUS.

All this I knew. But while his Imperfections  
 Are thy glad Theme, thou hast forgot his Virtues.

VOLUSIUS.

I leave that Subject to the smooth GALEUS,  
 And these his *Volscian* Flatterers—His Virtues!  
 Trust me there is no Insolence that treads  
 So high as that which rears itself on Virtue.

TULLUS.

Well, be it so—I meant, that even his Vices  
 Should, on this great Occasion, serve the *Volsci*.

VOLU-

VOLUSIUS.

Confusion! there it is! there lurks the Sting  
 Of our Dishonour! while this MARCIUS leads  
 The *Roman* Armies, ours are driven before him.  
 Behold, he changes Sides; when with him changes  
 The Fortune of the War. Strait they grow *Volsci*  
 And we victorious *Romans*—Such, no doubt,  
 Such is his secret Boast—Ay, this vile Brand,  
 Success itself will fix for ever on us;  
 And, TULLUS, thou, 'tis thou must answer for it.

TULLUS, *aside*.

His Words are Daggers to my Heart; I feel  
 Their Truth, but am asham'd to own my Folly.

VOLUSIUS.

O Shame! O Infamy! the Thought consumes me,  
 It scalds my Eyes with Tears, to see a *Roman*  
 Borne on our Shoulders to immortal Fame:  
 Just in the happy Moment that decided  
 The long Dispute of Ages, that for which  
 Our generous Ancestors had toil'd and bled,  
 To see him then step in and steal our Glory!  
 O that we first had perish'd all! A People,  
 Who cannot find in their own proper Force  
 Their own Protection, are not worth the saving!

TULLUS

It must have Way! I will no more suppress it—  
 Know, then, my rough old Friend, no less than thee  
 His Conduct hurts me, and upbraids my Folly.  
 I wake as from a Dream. What Demon mov'd me?  
 What doating Generosity? his Woes,  
 Was it his Woes! to see the brave reduc'd  
 To trust his mortal Foe? perhaps, a little  
 That work'd within my Bosom—But, VOLUSIUS,  
 That was not all—I will to thee confess  
 The Weakness of my Heart—Yes, it was Pride,  
 The dazzling Pride to see my Rival-Warriour  
 The great CORIOLANUS, bend his Soul,  
 His haughty Soul, to sue for my Protection.

Protection

Protection said I? were it that alone,  
 I had been base to have refus'd him that,  
 To have refus'd him aught a gallant Foe  
 Owes to a gallant Foe.—But to exalt him  
 To the same Level, nay above myself;  
 To yield him the Command of half my Troops,  
 The choicest acting Half—That, that was Madness!  
 Was weak, was mean, unworthy of a Man!—

VOLUSIUS.

I scorn to flatter thee—It was indeed.

TULLUS.

Curse on the Slave, GALESUS! soothing, he  
 Seiz'd the fond Moment of Infatuation,  
 And clinch'd the Chains my generous Folly forg'd.  
 How shall I from this Labyrinth escape?  
 Must it then be! what cruel Genius dooms me,  
 In War or Peace to creep beneath his Fortune?

VOLUSIUS.

That Genius is thyself. If thou canst bear  
 The very Thought of stooping to this *Roman*,  
 Thou from that Moment art his Vassal, TULLUS;  
 By that thou dost acknowledge, Parent Nature  
 Has form'd him thy Superior. But if fix'd  
 Upon the Base of manly Resolution,  
 Thou say'st—I will be free! I will command!  
 I and my Country! then—O never doubt it—  
 We shall find Means to crush this vain Intruder;  
 Even I myself—this Hand—

Nay, hear me, TULLUS,

'Tis not yet come to that, that last Resource.  
 I do not say we should employ the Dagger,  
 While other, better Means are in our Power.

TULLUS.

No, my VOLUSIUS, Fortune will not drive us,  
 Or I am much deceiv'd, to that Extreme:  
 We shall not want the strongest fairest Plea,  
 To give a solemn Sanction to his Fate.  
 He will betray himself. Whate'er his Rage

OF



Of Passion talks, a Weakness for his Country  
Sticks in his Soul, and he is still a *Roman*.  
Soon shall we see him tempted to the Brink  
Of this sure Precipice—Then down, at once,  
Without Remorse, we hurl him to Perdition!—

But hark! the Trumpet calls us to a Scene  
I should detest, if not from Hope we thence  
May gather Matter to mature our Purpose.



## SCENE III.

*The back Scene opens, and discovers CORIOLANUS sitting on his Tribunal, attended by his Lictors, and a Croud of Volscian Officers. Files of Troops drawn up on either Hand. In the Depth of the Scene appear the Deputies from the Roman Senate, M. MINUCIUS, POSTHUMUS COMINIUS, SP. LARTIUS, P. PINNARIUS, and Q. SULPITIUS, all Consular Senators, who had been his most zealous Friends. And behind them march the Priests, the Sacrificers, the Augurs, and the Guardians of the sacred Things, drest in their Ceremonial Habits. These advance slowly, betwixt the Files of Soldiers, under Arms. As TULLUS enters, CORIOLANUS rising salutes him.*

CORIOLANUS.

Here, noble TULLUS, sit, and judge my Conduct;  
Nor spare to check me if I act amiss.

TULLUS.

MARCIUS, the *Volscian* Fate is in thy Hands.

[CORIOLANUS is seated again, and TULLUS places himself upon a Tribunal on his Left Hand. Mean time the Roman Deputies advance up to CORIOLANUS and salute him, which he returns.

CORIOLANUS.

What, *Romans*, from the Generals of the *Volsci*  
Is your Demand?

MINU-

MINUCIUS.

O CORIOLANUS, *Rome*,

Nurse of thy tender Years, thy Parent-City,  
 Her Senators, her People, Priests, and Augurs,  
 Her every Order and Degree, by us,  
 Thy ever-zealous, still-unshaken Friends,  
 Sue in the most pathetic Terms for Peace.  
 And if in *This*, constrain'd, We from our Maxim,  
 Never to ask but give it, must depart ;  
 It is some Consolation, in the State  
 To which thou hast by thy superior Valour  
 Reduc'd us, that we ask it from a *Roman*.

CORIOLANUS.

I was a *Roman* once, and thought the Name  
 Was not dishonour'd by me ; but it pleas'd  
 Your Lords, the Mob of *Rome*, to take it from me ;  
 Nor will I now receive it back again.

MILUCIUS.

The Name thou mayst reject, but canst not throw  
 The Duties from thee which that Name imports ;  
 Indissoluble Duties, bound upon thee  
 By the strong Hand of Nature, and confirm'd  
 By the dread Sanction of all-ruling *Jove*.  
 Then hear thy Country's supplicating Voice ;  
 By all those Duties I conjure thee hear us.

CORIOLANUS.

Well—I will hear thee ; speak, declare thy Message.

MILUCIUS.

Give Peace, give healing Peace, to two brave Nations,  
 Fatigu'd with War, and sick of cruel Deeds !  
 To carry on Destruction's easy Trade,  
 Afflict Mankind, and scourge the World with War,  
 Is what each wicked, each ambitious Man,  
 Who lets his furious Passions loose, may do :  
 But in the flattering Torrent of Success,  
 To check his Rage, and drop th'avenging Sword,  
 When a repenting People ask it of him,  
 That is the genuine Bounty of a God.

Then

Then urge no further this your just Resentment ;  
Which, injur'd as you are, you needs must feel,  
But never ought to carry into Action,  
Against your sacred Country ; whence you drew  
Your Life, your Virtues, every mortal Good,  
That very Valour you employ against her.  
Stop, CORIOLANUS, ere, beyond Retreat,  
You plunge yourself in Crimes. To the fierce Joy  
Of Vengeance push'd to barbarous Excess,  
Repentance will succeed, and sickning Horror.  
Consider too the slippery State of Fortune.  
The Gods take Pleasure oft, when haughty Mortals  
On their own Pride erect a mighty Fabrick,  
By slightest means, to lay their towering Schemes  
Low in the Dust, and teach them they are nothing.  
Return, thou virtuous *Roman* ! to the Bosom  
Of thy imploring Country. Lo ! her Arms  
She fondly spreads to take thee back again,  
And by redoubled Love efface her Harshness.  
Return, and crown thee with the noblest Wreath,  
Which Glory can bestow — the Palm of Mercy !

C O R I O L A N U S.

MARCUS MINUCIUS, and ye other *Romans*,  
Respected Senators, and holy Flamens,  
Attend, and take to your Demand this Answer :  
Why court you me, the Servant of the *Volsci* ?  
It is to them that you must bend for Peace,  
Which on these only Terms they will accord you.  
“ Restore the conquer'd Lands, your former Wars  
“ Have ravish'd from them : from their Towns and  
Cities,  
“ Won by your Arms, withdraw your Colonies ;  
“ And to the full Immunities of *Rome*  
“ Frankly admit them, as you have the *Latines*.”  
Then, *Romans*, you have Peace, and not till then !  
If these are Terms which suit not your Ambition,  
They suit the State to which the *Volscian* Arms  
Have



Have now reduc'd you— We have learn'd from *Rome*  
To use our Fortune, and command the Vanquish'd.

TULLUS, (*aside.*)

Death to my Hopes! I'm now his Slave for ever.

CORIOLANUS, *addressing himself to the Volsci.*  
This, my illustrious Patrons and Protectors,  
*Volsci*, to you I ow'd. Permit me now  
To do myself and injur'd Honour Justice.

[*Turning again to the Romans.*]

As to the Liberty you idly vaunt  
To give me of returning to your City,  
'Tis what I hold unworthy of Acceptance.  
Can I return into th'ungrateful Bosom  
Of a distracted State, where, to the Rage  
Of a vile senseless Populace, the Laws  
Are by your shameful Weakness given a Prey?  
Who are the Men that hold the Sway among you?  
And whom have you expell'd, as even unworthy  
To live within the Cincture of your Walls!—  
O the wild Thought breaks in and troubles Reason!—  
With what, ye *Romans*, can the sowerest Censor,  
The most envenom'd Malice, justly charge me?  
Did I e'er break your Laws? Nay, did I e'er  
Do aught that could disturb the sacred Order,  
The Peace and social Harmony of Life;  
Or taint your ancient Sanctity of Manners?  
What was my Crime? I could not bear to see  
Your Dignity debas'd: to see the Rabble,  
Tread on the reverend grey Authority  
Of Senatorial Wisdom: Yes, for you,  
In your Defence I did enrage this Monster;  
And yet you basely left me to its Fury.  
Then talk no more of Services and Friendship:  
A Friend, who can, and does not shield, betrays me.  
Or if the Power was wanting, then your Senate  
Is sunk into Servility, and Bondage,  
Nor should a Freeman deign to sit among you.

MINUCIUS.

## MINUCIUS.

The Wisest are sometimes compell'd to yield  
 To popular Storms: Yet I defend not, MARCIUS,  
 Our timid Conduct; we have felt our Error,  
 And now invite thee back to aid the Senate,  
 With thy heroic Spirit to restrain  
 The giddy Rage of Faction, and to hold  
 The Reins of Government more firm hereafter.

As to th' Appeal which thou hast nobly made  
 In Vindication of thy spotless Fame,  
 With Pleasure we confirm it, and bear Witness  
 To all thy public and thy private Virtues:  
 But let us also beg thee not to stain  
 The Brightness of that Glory by a Crime,  
 Which, unrepented, would disgrace them all,  
 A dire rebellious War against thy Country.

## CORIOLANUS.

Absurd! What can you mean? To call a People,  
 Who with the last Indignity have us'd me,  
 To call my Foes my Country! No, MINUCIUS,  
 It is the generous Nation of the *Volsci*,  
 These brave, these virtuous Men, you see around me,  
 Who, when I wander'd a poor helpless Exile,  
 Took Pity of my Injuries and Woes;  
 Forgot the former Mischiefs of my Sword;  
 Heap'd on me Kindness, Honours, Dignities;  
 Fear'd not to trust me with this high Command,  
 And plac'd me here the Guardian of their Cause:—  
 Be Witness, *Jove*!—It is alone their Nation  
 I henceforth will acknowledge for my Country!  
 Let this suffice—You have my Answer, ROMANS.

## COMINIUS.

This Answer, CORIOLANUS, is the Dictate  
 More of thy Pride than Magnanimity:  
 'Tis thy Revenge that gives it, not thy Virtue.  
 Art thou above the Gods? who joy to show'r  
 Their doubled Goodness on repenting Mortals?  
 But think not I intend, by This, to urge

D

Our

Our proffer'd Peace, so harshly treated, further.  
 That were a Weakness ill becoming *Romans*.  
 Yet I must tell thee, it would better suit  
 A fierce despotic Chief of barbarous Slaves,  
 Than the calm Dignity of one who sits  
 In the grave Senate of a free Republic,  
 To talk so high, and as it were to thrust  
 Plebeians from the native Rights of Man.—

C O R I O L A N U S.

Ha! dost thou come the People's Advocate  
 To Me, COMINIUS! Com'st thou to insult me!

C O M I N I U S.

Nay, hear me, MARCIUS:—These grey Hairs  
 impower me  
 To set thee right before this great Assembly:  
 And there was once a Time, thou wouldst have heard  
 Thy General with more Deference and Patience.—  
 I tell thee then, whoe'er amidst the Sons  
 Of Reason, Valour, Liberty, and Virtue,  
 Displays distinguish'd Merit, is a Noble  
 Of Nature's own creating. Such have risen  
 Sprung from the Dust, or where had been our Honours?  
 And such in radiant Bands will rise again,  
 In yon immortal City, that, when most  
 Deprest by Fate, and near apparent Ruin,  
 Returns, as with an Energy divine,  
 On her astonish'd Foes, and shakes them from her—  
 Your Pardon, VOLSCI—But This, C O R I O L A N U S,  
 Is what I had to say.

C O R I O L A N U S.

And I have heard it—  
*[Rising from his Tribunal; and  
 the Priests advancing to ad-  
 dress him, he prevents them.]*

For you, ye awful Ministers of Heaven,  
 Let me not hear your holy Lips profan'd  
 By urging what my Duty must refuse.  
 I bow in Adoration to the Gods;

I vene-



I venerate their Servants. But there is,  
 There is a Power, their chief, their darling Care,  
 The Guardian of Mankind, which to betray  
 Were violating all—And that is JUSTICE.

So far my public Character demands;  
 So far my Honour.—Now, what should forbid  
 The Man, and Friend, to be indulg'd a little?

Permit me to embrace thee, good MINUCIUS;  
 Thee, LARTIUS; you, PINNARIUS and SULPICIUS:  
 But chiefly thee, COMINIUS, who first rais'd me  
 To Deeds of Arms; who from thy Consular Brow  
 Took thy own Crown, and with it circled mine.  
 Tho nought can shake my Purpose, yet I wish  
 That *Rome* had sent me others on this Errand.  
 I thank you for your Friendship. The Protection,  
 Which you have given to those, whom once I call'd  
 By tender Names, I would not now remember.  
 How shall I—say—return your generous Goodness?  
 O there is nothing you, as Friends, can ask,  
 My grateful Heart will not with Pleasure grant you.

COMINIUS.

We thank thee, CORIOLANUS—But a *Roman*  
 Disdains that Favour you refuse his Country.

CORIOLANUS.

[*To the Volscian Officers.*

See that they be, with due Regard and Safety,  
 Conducted back.

[*To the Roman Senators.*

I will suspend th' Assault,  
 Till to these Terms, of which we will not bate  
 The smallest Part, your Senate may have Time  
 To send their latest Answer. Then we cut  
 All further Treaty off. *Romans*, farewell.

*The End of the Third ACT.*

D 2

ACT



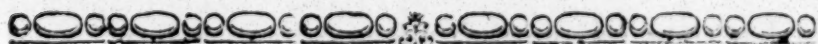
## A C T IV.

## S C E N E I.

TULLUS *alone.*

WHAT is the Mind of Man? A restless Scene  
Of Vanity and Weakness; shifting still,  
As shift the Lights of our uncertain Knowledge;  
Or as the various Gale of Passion breathes.

None ever thought himself more deeply founded  
On what is right, nor felt a nobler Ardor,  
Than I, when I invested CAIUS MARCIUS  
With this ill-judg'd Command. Now it appears  
Distraction, Folly, monstrous Folly! Meanness!  
And down I plunge, betray'd even by my Virtue,  
From Gulph to Gulph, from Shame to deeper Shame.



## S C E N E II.

TULLUS. GALESUS.

GALESUS.

I listen'd, TULLUS, to th' important Scene  
That lately pass'd before us, with most strict  
Unprejudic'd Attention; and have since  
Revolv'd it in my Mind, both as a Man,  
Ally'd to all Mankind, and as a *Volscian*.  
Indeed our Terms are high, and by the Manner

In

In which they were prescrib'd by CORIOLANUS,  
 Are what we cannot hope will e'er be granted.  
 They should be soften'd. Let us yield a little,  
 Conscious ourselves to a great Nation's Pride,  
 The Pride of human Nature. Could the *Romans*  
 Stoop to such Peace, commanded by the Sword,  
 They then were Slaves, unworthy our Alliance.

TULLUS.

Gods! do I hear in thee, one of the Chiefs  
 Intrusted with the Honour of the *Volsci*,  
 An Advocate for *Rome*?

GALESUS.

I glory, TULLUS,  
 To own myself an Advocate for Peace.  
 Peace is the happy natural State of Man;  
 War his Corruption, his Disgrace—

TULLUS.

His Safeguard!  
 His Pride! his Glory!—What but War, just War,  
 Gave *Greece* her Heroes? Those who drew the Sword  
 (As we do now) against the Sons of Rapine;  
 To quell proud Tyrants, and to free Mankind.

GALESUS.

Yes, TULLUS, when to just Defence the Warrior  
 Confines his Force, he is a worship'd Name,  
 Dear to Mankind, the First and Best of Mortals!  
 Yet still, if this can by soft Means be done,  
 And fair Accommodation, that is better.  
 Why should we purchase with the Blood of Thou-  
 sands,

What may be gain'd by mutual just Concession?  
 Why give up Peace, the best of human Blessings,  
 For the vain cruel Pride of useless Conquest?

TULLUS.

These soothing Dreams of philosophic Quiet  
 Are only fit for unfrequented Shades.  
 The Sage should quit the busy bustling World



Ill suited to his gentle Meditations,  
And in some Desert find that Peace he loves.

GALESUS.

Mistaken Man ! Philosophy consists not  
In airy Schemes, or idle Speculations :  
The Rule and Conduct of all social Life  
Is her great Province. Not in lonely Cells  
Obscure she lurks, but holds her heavenly Light  
To Senates and to Kings, to guide their Councils,  
And teach them to reform and bless Mankind.  
All Policy but her's is false, and rotten ;  
All Valour not conducted by her Precepts  
Is a destroying Fury sent from Hell  
To plague unhappy Man, and ruin Nations.

TULLUS.

To stop the Waste of that destroying Fury,  
Is the great Cause and Purpose of this War.  
Art thou a Friend to Peace ?—subdue the *Romans*.  
Who, who, but they, have turn'd this antient Land,  
Where, from *Saturnian* Times, harmonious Concord  
Still lov'd to dwell, into a Scene of Blood,  
Of endless Discord, and perpetual Rapine ?  
The Sword, the vengeful Sword, must drain away  
This boiling Blood, that thus disturbs the Nations !  
Talk not of Terms. It is a vain Attempt  
To bind th' Ambitious and Unjust by Treaties :  
These they elude a thousand specious Ways ;  
Or if they cannot find a fair Pretext,  
They blush not in the Face of Heaven to break them.

GALESUS.

Why then affronted Heaven will combat for us.  
Set Justice on our Side, and then my Voice  
Shall be as loud for War as thine ; my Sword  
Shall strike as deep ; at least my Blood shall flow  
As freely, TULLUS, in my Country's Cause.  
But as I then would die to serve the *Volscians*,  
So now I dare to serve them by opposing,  
Even with my single Voice, th' impetuous Torrent  
That

That hurries us away beyond the Bounds  
Of temperate Wisdom; and presume to tell thee,  
It is thy Passion, not thy Prudence dictates  
This haughty Language.

TULLUS.

Yes, it is my Passion,  
A Passion for the Glory of my Country,  
That scorns your narrow Views of timid Prudence.  
Our injur'd Honour drew our Swords, and never  
Shall they be sheath'd while I command the *Volsicians*,  
Till *Rome* submits to *Antium*.—

GALESUS.

*Rome* will perish  
Ere she submit; and she has still her Walls,  
The Strength of her Allies, her native Valour,  
Which oft has sav'd her in the worst Extremes,  
And, stronger yet than all, Despair, to aid her.

TULLUS.

All these will nought avail her, if our Fears  
Come not to her Assistance—But, GALESUS,  
Why urge you this to me? Go, talk to MARCIUS.  
The War has given him all his Pride could hope for,  
To see *Rome*'s Senate humbled at his Feet:  
He now may wish to reign in Peace at *Antium*,  
And thou, perhaps, art come an Envoy from him,  
To learn if I shall prove a quiet Subject.

GALESUS.

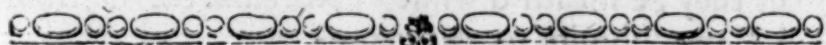
Thro' this unguarded Opening of thy Soul,  
I see what stings thee—Ah! beware of Envy!  
If that pale Fury seize thee, thou art lost!  
TULLUS, 'tis easier far, from the clear Breast,  
To keep out treacherous Vice, than to expel it.  
Farewel. Remember I have done my Duty.

[Goes out.]

TULLUS, alone.

This Man discerns my Heart—Well: What of that?  
Am I afraid its Movements should be seen?  
I, whose clear Thoughts have never shunn'd the Light,

Must I now seek to hide them? O Misfortune!  
 To have reduc'd myself to such a State,  
 So much beneath the Greatness of my Soul,  
 That, like a Coward, I must learn to practise  
 The wretched Arts of vile Diffimulation!  
 By Heaven I will not do 't—I will not stoop  
 To veil my Discontent a Moment longer.  
 But see! my Rival comes, the happy MARCIUS,  
 His haughty Mien, his very Looks, affront me.



## SCENE III.

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS.

CORIOLANUS.

TULLUS, I have receiv'd Intelligence,  
 That a strong Body of the *Latin* Troops  
 Is in full March to raise the Siege of *Rome*.  
 Another Day will bring them to its Aid.  
 But go thou forth, and lead the valiant Bands,  
 By thee commanded, to repel these Succours.  
 Go, and cut off from *Rome* its last Resource.

TULLUS.

I lead my Troops, from the great Scene of Action,  
 From falling *Rome*, which, ere To-morrow's Sun  
 Shall set, may be our Prey! Sure you forget  
 My Rank and Station—I disdain the Service:  
 Give it to some you may command. For me,  
 I own no Master but the *Volscian* States.  
*Rome* is my Object. I from *Antium* brought  
 The noblest Army ever shook her Walls.  
 And shall I now, on that decisive Day,  
 Doom'd by the Gods to lay her Pride in Ashes,  
 Shall I be absent from the glorious Work?  
 It is the highest Outrage even to think it.—  
 Just Gods! Dost thou presume to give thy Orders  
 To me? to me! thy Equal in Command?  
 Nay, thy Superior? Was it not my Hand,  
 My lavish Hand, bestow'd thy Power upon thee?

And



And know, proud *Roman*, that the Man who gave it,  
Can at his Will resume it.

CORIOLANUS.

I propos'd  
This Expedition to thee as thy Friend,  
Not as thy General, TULLUS. We are both  
Commanders here; and for my Share of Pow'r,  
Whene'er the Council of the *Volscian* States,  
Who cloath'd me with it, shall again demand it,  
I at their Feet will lay it down, persuaded,  
The canker'd Tongue of Envy's Self must own,  
That by my Service I have well deserv'd it.

TULLUS

Was it to Them, or Me, you hither came  
To crave Protection? Was not then your Fortune,  
Your Liberty, your Life, at my Disposal?  
I rais'd you from the Dust, a wretched Exile,  
An Outcast, helpless, friendless, driven to beg  
The lowest Refuge which Despair can seek,  
Shelter amidst thy Foes. My pitying Goodness  
Protected, trusted, and believ'd you grateful.  
O ill-plac'd Confidence! —

CORIOLANUS.

Immortal Gods!

Hear I these Words from TULLUS!

TULLUS.

What for all this

Is thy Return? Pride; Self-sufficiency;  
Councils apart from mine; despotic Orders;  
The Glory of the War all pilfer'd from me:  
And, to complete the Whole, a *Latin* Army  
Now conjur'd up to draw me from the Siege;  
Till by cajoling our tame Chiefs, and dazling  
The senseless Eyes of the low Mob of Soldiers,  
Thou shalt be solely seated in the Power  
Which, thank my Folly! now is shar'd betwixt us.

CORIOLANUS.

O Indignation! — Down thou swelling Heart —  
I will be calm—I will.—Thou dost accuse me  
Of the worst Vice that can debase Mankind,

Of

Of black Ingratitude. On what Foundations?  
 What have I done to merit such a Charge?  
 Is it my Fault, if in the *Volscian* Army  
 My Name is as rever'd and great as thine?  
 Can I forbid Authority, and Fame,  
 To follow Merit and Success?—You knew (known,  
 The Man whom you employ'd, and should have  
 He would not be a Cypher in Employment.

TULLUS.

Think'st thou my Heart can better brook than thine  
 To be that Cypher! that dishonour'd Tool!  
 Subservient to th' Ambition of another?  
 Gods! I had rather live a drudging Peasant,  
 Unknown to Glory, in some *Alpine* Village;  
 Than, at the Head of these victorious Legions,  
 Bear the high Name of Chief, without the Power.  
 No, MARCIUS, no. I will command indeed:  
 And thou shalt learn, with all the *Volscian* Army,  
 To treat their General with Respect.

CORIOLANUS.

Respect!

O TULLUS! TULLUS! by the Powers divine!  
 I bore thee once Respect, as high as Man  
 Can shew to Man. From thee, my Foe, my Rival,  
 I nor disdain'd nor fear'd to ask Protection.  
 You gave me all I ask'd, you gave me more,  
 With noble Warmth of Heart! which, to Esteem,  
 Added the Ties of Gratitude, and Friendship.  
 Whatever since, in Council, or in Arms,  
 Has been by me achiev'd, was done for thee.  
 My Glory all was thine. The Palms I gain'd  
 Only compos'd a Garland for his Brow,  
 Who rais'd this banish'd Man to tread on *Rome*.

TULLUS.

To tread on him who rais'd him—That, I know,  
 Is thy ambitious Purpose; but be certain,  
 However *Rome* may bend beneath thy Fortune,  
 Thou shalt not find an easy Conquest here.

CORIOLANUS.

May *Jove* with Lightning strike me to the Centre  
 If from the Day I saw thy Face at *Antium*,  
 My Heart has ever form'd one secret Thought  
 To hurt thy Honour, or depress thy Greatness :  
 I was thy Friend, thy Soldier, and thy Servant.  
 But now I will as openly avow,  
 Thy Jealousy has, with envenom'd Breath,  
 Made such a sudden Ravage in our Friendship,  
 I know not what to think. —

TULLUS.

Think me thy Foe.  
 There is no lasting Friendship with the Proud

CORIOLANUS.

Nor with the Jealous — But of this enough.  
 Come, let us turn our Fire a nobler Way :  
 We have a worthier Quarrel to pursue. —  
 It were unjust, dishonourable, base,  
 Our Pride should hurt the *Volscian* Cause.

TULLUS.

No, MARCIUS.

I mean to guard it better for the future :  
 The *Volscian* Cause is safest with a *Volscian*.  
 I therefore claim, insist upon my Right ;  
 That you shall yield me my Command in Turn.  
 The first Attack was yours : 'Tis scanty Justice,  
 The second should be mine.

CORIOLANUS.

TULLUS, 'tis yours.

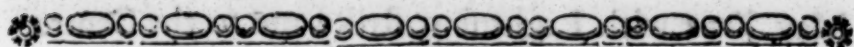
O it imports not which of us command !  
 Give me the lowest Rank among your Troops :  
 All *Italy* will know, the Voice of Fame  
 Will tell all future Times, that I was present ;  
 That CORIOLANUS in the *Volscian* Army  
 Assisted, when Imperial *Rome* was sack'd ;  
 That City which, while he maintain'd her Cause,  
 Invincible herself, made *Antium* tremble.

TULLUS.

What arrogant Presumption !

TULLUS.





## SCENE IV.

*To them* VOLUSIUS, *entering hastily.*

TULLUS.

Ha! VOLUSIUS,  
Thy Looks declare some Message of Importance.

VOLUSIUS.

TULLUS, they do — I was to find thee, MARCIUS,  
To thee a second Deputation comes,  
Thy Mother, and thy Wife, with a long Train  
Of all the noblest Ladies *Rome* can boast,  
In mourning Habits clad, approach our Camp,  
Preceded by a Herald, to demand  
Another Audience of Thee.

CORIOLANUS.

How, VOLUSIUS!  
Said you, the *Roman* Ladies! Low, indeed,  
Must be the State of *Rome*, when thus her Matrons  
She sends amidst the Tumults of a Camp,  
To beg Protection for the Men, who lie  
Trembling behind their Ramparts — Come! once  
more!  
And see me put an End to Prayers and Treaty!



## SCENE V.

TULLUS. VOLUSIUS.

VOLUSIUS.

TULLUS, 'tis well. This answers to my Wishes.

TULLUS.

How? What is well? That humbled *Rome* once  
more  
Shall deck him with the Trophies of our Arms?  
Vo-

VOLUSIUS.

And hop'st thou nothing from this blest Event?  
 They who have often blasted mighty Heroes,  
 Who oft have stoln into the firmest Hearts,  
 And melted them to Folly; They, my Friend,  
 Will do what Wisdom never could effect.

TULLUS.

Think'st thou the Prayers and Tears of wailing Women  
 Can shake the Man, who with such cold Disdain  
 Stood firm against those venerable Consuls,  
 And spurn'd the Genius of his kneeling Country?

VOLUSIUS.

It was his Pride alone that made him ours.  
 That Passion kept him firm; the flattering Charm  
 Of humbling those, who in their Persons bore  
 The whole collected Majesty of *Rome*.  
 These Women are no proper Objects for it:  
 He cannot triumph o'er his Wife and Mother,  
 On this my Hopes are founded, that these Women  
 May by their gentler Influence subdue him.

TULLUS.

Whate'er th' Event, he shall no longer here,  
 As wave his Passions, dictate Peace, or War.  
 Whether his stubborn Soul maintains its Firmness,  
 Or yields to Female Prayers, the *Volsian* Honour  
 Will be alike betray'd. If *Rome* prevails,  
 He stops our conquering Arms from her Destruction;  
 If he rejects her Suit, he reigns our Tyrant.  
 But, by th' Immortal Gods! his short-liv'd Empire  
 Shall never see yon radiant Sun descend.

VOLUSIUS.

Blest be those Gods that have at last inspir'd thee  
 With Resolution equal to thy Cause,  
 The Cause of Liberty! —

TULLUS.

Be sure, VOLUSIUS,  
 If that should happen which thy Hopes portend;  
 Should he, by Nature tam'd, disarm'd by Love,  
 Respite

Respite the *Roman* Doom — He seals his own :  
By Heaven! he dies.

VOLUSIUS.

Let me embrace thee, TULLUS !  
Now breaking from the Cloud, which, like the Sun,  
Thy own too bounteous Beams had drawn around thee.

TULLUS.

You was deceiv'd, my Friend. When I with  
Tameness,

With Tameness which astonish'd thy brave Spirit,  
Seem'd to submit to that unequal Sway

He arrogated o'er me ; know, my Heart  
Ne'er swell'd so high as in that cruel Moment.

My Indignation, like th' imprison'd Fire  
Pent in the troubled Breast of glowing *Ætna*,

Burnt deep and silent : But, collected now,  
It shall beneath its Fury bury MARCIUS !

'Tis fixt. Our Tyrant dies.

VOLUSIUS.

TULLUS, my Sword  
Here claims to be employ'd. — Nor mine alone —  
There are some worthy *Volsci* still remaining,  
Who think with us, and pine beneath the Laurels  
A *Roman* Chief bestows.

TULLUS.

Go, find them strait,  
And bring them to the Space before his Tent ;  
'Tis there he will receive this Deputation.  
Then if he sinks beneath these Womens Prayers —  
Or if he does not — But, VOLUSIUS, wait,  
I give thee strictest Charge to wait my Signal.  
Perhaps I may find Means to free the *Volsci*  
Without his Blood. If not — We will be free.

*The End of the Fourth A C T.*

ACT





## ACT V.

## SCENE I.

*Trumpets sounding.*

*The Scene discovers the Camp, a Croud of Volscian Officers with Files of Soldiers, drawn up as before. Enter CORIOLANUS, TULLUS, GALESUS, VOLUSIUS. The Roman Ladies advance slowly from the Depth of the Stage, with VETURIA the Mother of CORIOLANUS, and VOLUMNIA his Wife, at their Head, all clad in Habits of Mourning. CORIOLANUS stands at the Head of the Volsci, surrounded by his Liſtors; but, when he perceives his Mother and Wife, after some Struggle, he advances, and goes haſtily to embrace them.*

*CORIOLANUS advancing.*

**L**OWER your Faſces, Liſtors——

Oh VETURIA!

Thou beſt of Parents!

VETURIA.

CORIOLANUS, ſtop.

Whom am I to embrace? A Son, or Foe?

Say, in what Light am I regarded here?

Thy Mother, or thy Captive?

CORIOLANUS.

CORIOLANUS.

Justly, Madam,  
You check my Fondness, that, by Nature hurry'd,  
Forgot I was the General of the *Volsci*,  
And you a Deputy from hostile *Rome*.

[He goes back to his former Station.

I hear you with Respect. Speak your Commission.

VETURIA.

Think not I come a Deputy from *Rome*.  
*Rome*, once rejected, scorns a Second Suit.  
You have already heard whate'er the Tongue  
Of Eloquence can plead, whate'er the Wisdom  
Of sacred Age, the Dignity of Senates,  
And Virtue, can enforce. Behold me here,  
Sent by the Shades of your immortal Fathers,  
Sent by the Genius of the *Marcian* Line,  
Commission'd by my own maternal Heart,  
To try the soft, yet stronger Powers of Nature.  
Thus authoriz'd, I ask, nay, claim a Peace,  
On equal, fair, and honourable Terms,  
To Thee, to *Rome*, and to the *Volscian* People.  
Grant it, my Son! Thy Mother begs it of thee,  
Thy Wife, the best, the kindest of her Sex,  
And these illustrious Matrons, who have sooth'd  
The gloomy Hours thou hast been absent from us.  
We, by whate'er is great and good in Nature,  
By every Duty, by the Gods, conjure Thee!  
To grant us Peace, and turn on other Foes  
Thy Arms, where thou may'st purchase virtuous  
Glory.

CORIOLANUS.

I should, VETURIA, break those holy Bonds  
That hold the wide Republic of Mankind,  
Society, together; I should grow  
A Wretch, unworthy to be call'd thy Son;  
I should, with my VOLUMNIA's fair Esteem,  
Forfeit her Love; these Matrons would despise me—  
Could I betray the *Volscian* Cause, thus trusted,

Thus

Thus recommended to me—No, my Mother,  
You cannot sure, you cannot ask it of me!

V E T U R I A.

And does my Son so little know me? me!  
Who took such Care to form his tender Years,  
Left to my Conduct by his dying Father?  
Have I so ill deserv'd that Trust? Alas!  
Am I so low in thy Esteem, that thou  
Should'st e'er imagine I could urge a Part  
Which in the least might stain the *Marcian* Honour?  
No, let me perish rather! perish All!  
Life has no Charms compar'd to spotless Glory!  
I only ask, thou would'st forbid thy Troops  
To waste our Lands, and to assault yon City,  
Till Time be given for mild and righteous Measures.  
Grant us but One Year's Truce: Mean while thou may'st,  
With Honour and Advantage to both Nations,  
Betwixt us mediate a perpetual Peace.

C O R I O L A N U S.

Alas! my Mother! That were granting all.

V E T U R I A.

Canst thou refuse me such a just Petition,  
The First Request thy Mother ever made Thee?  
Canst thou to her Intreaties, Prayers, and Tears,  
Prefer a savage obstinate Revenge?  
Have Love and Nature lost all Power within thee?

C O R I O L A N U S.

No,— in my Heart they reign as strong as ever.  
Come, I conjure you, quit ungrateful *Rome*,  
Come, and complete my Happiness at *Antium*,  
You, and my dear VOLUMNIA— There, VETURIA,  
There shall you see with what Respect the *Volsci*  
Will treat the Wife and Mother of their General.

V E T U R I A.

Treat me thyself with more Respect, my Son;  
Nor dare to shock my Ears with such Proposals.  
Shall I desert my Country, I who come  
To plead her Cause? Ah no!— A Grave in *Rome*  
E Would



Would better please me, than a Throne at *Antium*.  
 How hast thou thus forsaken all my Precepts?  
 How hast thou thus forgot thy Love to *Rome*?  
 O CORIOLANUS, when with hostile Arms,  
 With Fire and Sword, you enter'd on our Borders,  
 Did not the fostering Air, that breathes around us,  
 Allay thy guilty Fury, and instil  
 A certain native Sweetness thro' thy Soul?  
 Did not your Heart thus murmur to itself?  
 " These Walls contain whatever can command  
 " Respect from Virtue, or is dear to Nature,  
 " The Monuments of Piety and Valour,  
 " The sculptur'd Forms, the Trophies of my Fathers,  
 " My household Gods, my Mother, Wife and Chil-  
 " dren!"

## CORIOLANUS.

Ah! you seduce me with too tender Views!—  
 These Walls contain the most corrupt of Men,  
 A base seditious Herd; who trample Order,  
 Distinction, Justice, Laws, beneath their Feet,  
 Insolent Foes to Worth, the Foes of Virtue!

## VETURIA.

Thou hast not thence a Right to lift thy Hand  
 Against the whole Community, which forms  
 Thy ever-sacred Country— That consists  
 Not of coeval Citizens alone:  
 It knows no Bounds; it has a Retrospect  
 To Ages past; it looks on those to come;  
 And grasps of all the general Worth and Virtue.  
 Suppose, my Son, that I to thee had been  
 A harsh obdurate Parent, even unjust:  
 How would the monstrous Thought with Horror  
 strike thee,  
 Of plunging, from Revenge, thy raging Steel  
 Into her Breast, who nurs'd thy infant Years!—

## CORIOLANUS.

*Rome* is no more! that *Rome* which nurs'd my Youth;  
 That *Rome*, conducted by *Patrician* Virtue,

She is no more! My Sword shall now chastise  
These Sons of Pride and Dirt! Her upstart Tyrants!  
Who have debas'd the noblest State on Earth  
Into a sordid Democratic Faction.

Why will my Mother join her Cause to theirs?

V E T U R I A.

Forbid it, *Jove!* that I should e'er distinguish  
My Interest from the general Cause of *Rome*;  
Or live to see a foreign hostile Arm  
Reform th'Abuses of our Land of Freedom.

[*Pausing.*]

But 'tis in vain, I find, to reason more.  
Is there no way to reach thy filial Heart,  
Once fam'd as much for Piety as Courage?  
Oft hast thou justly triumph'd, C O R I O L A N U S;  
Now yield one Triumph to thy widow'd Mother;  
And send me back amidst the loud Acclaims,  
The grateful Transports of deliver'd *Rome*,  
The happiest far, the most renown'd of Women!

C O R I O L A N U S.

Why, why, V E T U R I A, wilt thou plead in vain?

[TULLUS. *Aside to VOLUSIUS.*]

See, see, VOLUSIUS, how the strong Emotions  
Of powerful Nature shake his inmost Soul!  
See how they tear him.—If he long resists them,  
He is a God, or something worse than Man.

V E T U R I A.

O MARCIUS, MARCIUS! canst thou treat me thus?  
Canst thou complain of *Rome's* Ingratitude,  
Yet be to me so cruelly ungrateful?  
To me! who anxious rear'd thy Youth to Glory?  
Whose only Joy, these many Years, has been,  
To boast that C O R I O L A N U S was my Son?  
And dost thou then renounce me for thy Mother?  
Spurn me before these Chiefs, before those Soldiers,  
That weep thy stubborn Cruelty? Art thou

E 2

The

The hardest Man to me in this Assembly?  
Look at me! Speak!

*[Pausing, during which he appears  
in great Agitation.]*

Still dost thou turn away?

Inexorable? Silent?—Then, behold me,  
Behold thy Mother, at whose Feet thou oft  
Hast kneel'd with Fondness, kneeling now at thine,  
Wetting thy stern Tribunal with her Tears.

CORIOLANUS.

*[Raises her.]*

VETURIA, rise. I cannot see Thee thus.  
It is a Sight uncomely, to behold  
My Mother at my Feet, and that to urge  
A Suit, relentless Honour must refuse.

VOLUMNIA.

*[Advancing.]*

Since, CORIOLANUS, thou dost still retain,  
In spite of all thy Mother now has pleaded,  
Thy dreadful Purpose, Ah! how much in vain  
Were it for me to join my Supplications!  
The Voice of thy VOLUMNIA, once so pleasing  
How shall it hope to touch the Husband's Heart,  
When proof against the Tears of such a Parent?  
I dare not urge what to thy Mother thou  
So firmly hast deny'd,—But I must weep—  
Must weep, if not thy harsh Severity,  
At least thy Situation. O permit me,

*[Taking his Hand.]*

To shed my gushing Tears upon thy Hand!  
To press it with the cordial Lips of Love!  
And take my last Farewel!

CORIOLANUS.

Yet, yet, my Soul,

Be firm, and persevere—

VOLUMNIA.

Ah CORIOLANUS!

Is then this Hand, this Hand to me devoted,  
The Pledge of Nuptial Love, that has so long

Pro-



Protected, bless'd, and shelter'd us with Kindness,  
Now lifted up against us? Yet I love it,  
And, with submissive Veneration, bow  
Beneath th' Affliction which it heaps upon us.  
But O! what nobler Transports would it give thee!  
What Joy beyond Expression! couldst thou once  
Surmount the furious Storm of fierce Revenge,  
And yield thee to the Charms of Love and Mercy.  
Oh make the glorious Trial!

C O R I O L A N U S.

Mother! Wife!

Are all the Powers of Nature leagu'd against me?  
I cannot!—will not!—Leave me, my VOLUMNIA!

V O L U M N I A.

Well, I obey—How bitter thus to part!  
Upon such Terms to part! perhaps for ever!—  
But tell me, ere I hence unroot my Feet,  
When to my lonely Home I shall return,  
What from their Father, to our little Slaves,  
Unconscious of the Shame to which you doom them,  
What shall I say?

*[Pausing; He highly agitated.]*

Nay—tell me, C O R I O L A N U S!

C O R I O L A N U S.

Tell thee! What shall I tell thee? See these Tears!  
These Tears will tell thee what exceeds the Power  
Of Words to speak, whate'er the Son, the Husband,  
And Father, in one complicated Pang,  
Can feel—But leave me;—even in Pity leave me!  
Cease, cease, to torture me, my dear VOLUMNIA!  
You only tear my Heart; but cannot shake it:  
For by th' immortal Gods, the dread Avengers  
Of broken Faith!—

V O L U M N I A.

*[Kneeling.]*

Oh swear not, C O R I O L A N U S!

Oh vow not our Destruction!

VETURIA.

Daughter, rise.

Let us no more before the *Volſian* People  
 Expoſe ourſelves a Spectacle of Shame.  
 It is in vain we try to melt a Breſt,  
 That, to the beſt Affections Nature gives us,  
 Prefers the worſt—Hear me, proud Man! I have  
 A Heart as ſtout as thine. I came not hither,  
 To be ſent back rejected, baffled, ſham'd,  
 Hateful to *Rome*, becauſe I am Thy Mother :  
 A *Roman* Matron knows, in ſuch Extremes,  
 What Part to take—And thus I came provided.

[Drawing from under her Robe a Dagger.

Go! barbarous Son! go! double Parricide!  
 Ruſh o'er my Corſe to thy belov'd Revenge!  
 Tread on the bleeding Breſt of her, to whom  
 Thou ow'ſt thy Life!—Lo, thy firſt Victim!

CORIOLANUS. [Seizing her Hand.  
 Ha!

What doſt thou mean?

VETURIA.

To die, while *Rome* is free,  
 To ſeize the Moment, ere thou art her Tyrant.

CORIOLANUS.

O uſe thy Power more juſtly! Set not thus  
 My treacherous Heart in Arms againſt my Reaſon.  
 Here! here! thy Dagger will be well employ'd;  
 Strike here! and reconcile my fighting Duties.

VETURIA.

Off!—Set me free!—Think'ſt thou that Graſp, which  
 binds

My feeble Hand, can fetter too my Will?  
 No, my proud Son! Thou canſt not make me live,  
 If *Rome* muſt fall!—No Pow'r on Earth can do it!

CORIOLANUS.

Pity me, generous *Volſci*!—You are Men—  
 Muſt it then be?—Confuſion!—Do I yield?  
 What is it? Is it Weakneſs? Is it Virtue?—  
 Well! —

VE-

VETURIA.

What? Speak!

CORIO-  
LANUS.

O, no!—my stifled Words refuse  
A Passage to the Throes that wring my Heart.

VETURIA.

Nay, if thou yieldest, yield like CORIO-  
LANUS;  
And what thou do'st, do nobly!

CORIO-  
LANUS. [*Quitting her Hand.*

There!—'Tis done!—

Thine is the Triumph, Nature! [*To VETURIA in  
a low Tone of Voice.*

Ah VETURIA!

Rome by thy Aid is sav'd—but thy Son lost.

VETURIA.

He never can be lost, who saves his Country.

CORIO-  
LANUS. [*Turning to the Roman Ladies.*

Ye Matrons, Guardians of the Roman Safety,  
You to the Senate may report this Answer.  
We grant the Truce you ask. But on these Terms:  
That Rome, mean-time, shall to a Peace agree,  
Fair, equal, just, and such as may secure  
The Safety, Rights, and Honour of the VOLSCI.

[*To the Troops.*

VOLSCI, We raise the Siege. Go, and prepare,  
By the first Dawn, for your Return to Antium.

[*As the Troops retire, and CORIO-  
LANUS turns to the Roman Ladies;*

TULLUS. [*To VOLUSIUS aside.*

'Tis as we wish'd, VOLUSIUS—To your Station.  
But mark me well—Till thou shalt hear my Call,  
I charge thee not to stir. One Offer more  
My Honour bids me make to this proud Man,  
Before we strike the Blow——If he rejects it,  
His Blood be on his Head.

VOLUSIUS.

Well! I obey you.

[*He goes out.*

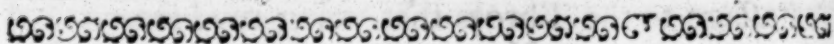
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CORIO-



CORIOLANUS.

Be it thy Care, *Galesus*, that a Safeguard  
Attend these noble Matrons back to *Rome*.



## SCENE II.

CORIOLANUS. TULLUS.

CORIOLANUS.

I plainly, TULLUS, by your Looks discern  
You disapprove my Conduct.

TULLUS.

CAIUS MARCIUS,

I mean not to assail thee with the Clamour  
Of loud Reproaches, and the War of Words;  
But, Pride apart, and all that can pervert  
The Light of steady Reason, here to make  
A candid fair Proposal

CORIOLANUS.

Speak. I hear thee.

TULLUS.

I need not tell thee, that I have perform'd  
My utmost Promise. Thou hast been protect'd;  
Hast had thy amplest, most ambitious Wish:  
Thy wounded Pride is heal'd, thy dear Revenge  
Completely fated; and, to crown thy Fortune,  
At the same time, thy Peace with *Rome* restor'd.  
Thou art no more a *Volscian*, but a *Roman*.  
Return, return; thy Duty calls upon thee,  
Still to protect the City thou hast sav'd:  
It still may be in Danger from our Arms.

CORIOLANUS.

Insolent Man! Is this thy fair Proposal?

TULLUS.

Be patient — Hear me speak — I have already  
From

From *Rome* protect'd thee ; now from the *Volsci*,  
From their just Vengeance, I will still protect Thee.  
Retire. I will take care thou may'st with Safety.

C O R I O L A N U S.

With Safety ! — Heav'ns ! — And think'st thou

C O R I O L A N U S

Will stoop to thee for Safety ? No ! my Safeguard  
Is in myself, a Bosom void of Blame,  
And the Great Gods, Protectors of the Just. —  
O'tis an Act of Cowardice and Baseness,  
To seize the very Time my Hands are fetter'd,  
By the strong Chain of former Obligations,  
The safe sure Moment to insult me. — Gods !  
Were I now free, as on that Day I was,  
When at *Corioli* I tam'd thy Pride,  
This had not been.

T U L L U S.

Thou speak'st the Truth : It had not.  
O for that Time again ! Propitious Gods,  
If you will bless me, grant it ! — Know, for That,  
For that dear Purpose, I have now propos'd  
Thou should'st return. I pray thee, *Marcus*, do it !  
And we shall meet again on nobler Terms.

C O R I O L A N U S.

When to the *Volsci* I have clear'd my Faith,  
Doubt not I shall find Means to meet thee nobly.  
We then our generous Quarrel may decide  
In the bright Front of some embattel'd Field,  
And not in private Brawls, like fierce Barbarians.

T U L L U S.

Thou canst not hope Acquittal from the *Volsci*. —

C O R I O L A N U S.

I do : — Nay more, expect their Approbation,  
Their Thanks ! I will obtain them such a Peace  
As thou durst never ask ; a perfect Union  
Of their whole Nation with imperial *Rome*

In

In all her Privileges, all her Rights.

By the just Gods, I will ! What would'st thou more ?

TULLUS.

What would I more ! Proud *Roman* ; This I would ;  
Fire the curst Forest where these *Roman* Wolves  
Haunt and infest their nobler Neighbours round  
them ;

Extirpate from the Bosom of this Land,  
A false perfidious People, who, beneath  
The Mask of Freedom, are a Combination  
Against the Liberty of Human-kind,  
The genuine Seed of Outlaws and of Robbers.

CORIOLANUS.

The Seed of Gods ! — 'Tis not for thee, vain  
Boaster !

'Tis not for such as Thou, so often spar'd  
By her victorious Sword, to talk of *Rome*,  
But with Respect and awful Veneration.  
Whate'er her Blots, whate'er her giddy Factions,  
There is more Virtue in one single Year  
Of *Roman* Story, than your *Volscian* Annals  
Can boast thro' all your creeping dark Duration !

TULLUS.

I thank thy Rage. This full displays the Traitor.

CORIOLANUS.

Ha ! Traitor !

TULLUS.

First, to thy own Country, Traitor !  
And Traitor, now, to mine !

CORIOLANUS.

Ye heavenly Powers !

I shall break loose — My Rage — But let us part —  
Lest my rash Hand should do a hasty Deed  
My cooler Thought forbids.

TULLUS.

Begone — Return —

To head the *Roman* Troops. I grant thee Quittance  
Pull



Full and complete of all those Obligations  
 Thou hast so oft insultingly complain'd  
 Fetter'd thy Hands. They now are free. I court  
 The worst thy Sword can do; whilst thou from me  
 Hast nothing to expect, but sore Destruction.  
 Quit then this hostile Camp. Once more I tell thee,  
 Thou art not here one single Hour in Safety.

CORIOLANUS.

Think'st thou to fright me hence? 7

TULLUS.

Thou wilt not then?

Thou wilt not take the Safety which I offer?

CORIOLANUS.

Till I have clear'd my Honour in your Council,  
 And prov'd before them all, to thy Confusion,  
 The Falshood of thy Charge; as soon in Battle  
 I would before thee fly, and howl for Mercy,  
 As quit the Station they have here assign'd me.

TULLUS.

*Volufius! Hoa!*

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### SCENE III.

*To them Volufius, and Conspirators, with their  
 Swords drawn.*

TULLUS.

Seize, and secure the Traitor!

CORIOLANUS.

*[Laying his Hand upon his Sword.]*

Who dares approach me, dies!

Vo-

VOLUSIUS.

Die thou!

[*As Coriolanus draws his Sword, Volusius and the Conspirators rush upon and stab him. Tullus standing by without having drawn his Sword.*]

CORIOLANUS.

[*Endeavouring to free himself.*]

Off!—Villains!

[*Falling.*]

Oh murdering Slaves! Assassinating Cowards!

[*Dies.*]

## SCENE IV.

[*Upon the Noise of the Tumult, enter hastily to them Galesus, the other Deputies of the Volscian States, Officers Friends of Coriolanus, and Titus with a large Band of Soldiers.*]

GALESUS.

[*As he enters.*]

Are we a Nation rul'd by Laws, or Fury?

How! Whence this Tumult?— [*Pausing.*]

Gods! what do I see?

The noble MARCIUS slain!

TULLUS.

You see a Traitor

Punish'd as he deserv'd, the Roman Yoke

That thrall'd us broken, and the Volsci free!

GALE-

GALESUS.

Hear me, great *Jove*! Hear, all you injur'd Powers  
 Of Friendship, Hospitality, and Faith!  
 By that heroic Blood, which from the Ground  
 Reeking to you for Vengeance cries, I swear!  
 This impious Breach of your eternal Laws,  
 This daring Outrage on the *Volscian* Honour,  
 Shall find in me a rigorous Avenger!  
 On the same Earth, polluted by their Crime,  
 I will not live with these unpunish'd Ruffians!

TULLUS.

This Deed is mine: I claim it all!—These Men,  
 These valiant Men, were but my Instruments,  
 To punish him who to our Face betray'd us.  
 We shall not fear to answer to the *Volsci*,  
 In a full Council of their States at *Antium*,  
 The glorious Charge of having stabb'd their Tyrant!

GALESUS.

TITUS, till then secure them.

[*Tullus and Conspirators  
 are led off.*]

[*Galesus, standing over the  
 Body of Coriolanus, after  
 a short Pause, proceeds.*]

*Volscian Fathers,*

And ye, brave Soldiers, see an awful Scene,  
 Demanding serious solemn Meditation.  
 This Man was once the Glory of his Age,  
 Disinterested, just, with every Virtue  
 Of civil Life adorn'd, in Arms unequall'd.  
 His only Blot was this; That, much provok'd,  
 He rais'd his vengeful Arm against his Country.  
 And, lo! the righteous Gods have now chastis'd him,  
 Even by the Hands of those for whom he fought.

Whatever private Views and Passions plead,  
 No Cause can justify so black a Deed:



These, when the angry Tempest clouds the Soul,  
May darken Reason, and her Course controul;  
But when the Prospect clears, her startled Eye  
Must from the treacherous Gulph with Horror fly,  
On whose wild Wave, by stormy Passions tost,  
So many hapless Wretches have been lost.  
Then be this Truth the Star by which we steer;  
*Above Ourselves our COUNTRY should be dear.*

*The E N D.*



